

**THE WOMAN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY
OF THE PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY**

PRESIDENT
MRS. J. SHANE NICHOLLS
5636 WOODMONT AVE.
PITTSBURGH, PA.

RECORDING SECRETARY
MRS. ANDREW W. HERRON
5547 FAIR OAKS STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA.

TREASURER
MISS MARY R. McCORD
1119 ALLEGHENY AVENUE
NORTH SIDE, PITTSBURGH, PA.

VICE-PRESIDENT AT LARGE
MRS. W. T. LARIMER
6358 AURELIA STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
MISS LUELLA MILLER
4733 BAYARD STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA.

TREASURER OF FOREIGNERS' FUND
MRS. H. W. GOLDEN
420 DAWSON AVENUE
BELLEVUE, PA.

Pittsburgh, Pa.
October 31st

Dear Mrs. Bennett;

I wanted so much to have a little time to sit down and talk things over with you while here, but had no opportunity. I don't feel that we ought to carry on our Temperance work any longer as we have been doing, when our Board takes the stand it does in the matter. Personally, I have never cared to belong to the W. C. T. U. for the reason that the women I have known

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who worked in that organization gave up their missionary and church work almost entirely. I have felt for some time, largely through my association with Mrs. Hutton and Mrs. Bryant that we should get our church women, who have not been nor would be reached by the H. C. T. U. to cooperate with that organization, in the great work of securing national prohibition. The temperance workers contend that the greatest hindrance to the complete overthrow of the drink traffic in our land is the indifference of our church people. The attitude of our Board leads me to think that they are right. Of course,

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I know, and you know that the permission of the General Assembly to take this matter up, is only an excuse and a poor one. If the women of the Board wanted to pass a resolution similar to that of the 'peace' one they would not so much as think of the General Assembly. Their obedience in this matter reminds me of that of the little girl, busy making her little garden, who when a neighbor lady called her to get her little brother who had gone down the street replied 'Mother said to make my garden and I am not allowed on the street.' As the mother stood by the lifeless form of the little boy who had been killed by an auto, she said to her daughter 'O, dear, if you had just remembered the greater command to look after little brother.'

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At this time where prohibition is in the air it seems such a pity to have our great Board a hindrance.

But since it seems very 'set' in its position, would it not be better for our women to devise some other method of lining up the women of our churches by 'Temperance Circles' of some kind, apart from our missionary societies?

I can see how it would be a loss to our missionary force in some places to have our women separate the work but I feel very deeply that it is not right to carry on this work in our Home Missionary Societies when our Board says, 'Go to the H. C. T. U. or get outside to do your temperance work!'

Very cordially yours
Frances B. Nicholls (over)

P.S. I trust that you were
none the worse for your
tremendous time in Pittsburgh.
Your addresses were greatly
appreciated and I am sure
will do much good.

I may have to except the
one in the executive which
seemed to us something
like cold water on a
blaze but it was not
your fault that you were
asked to speak as you did.
With best wishes.

F. B. H.

November 6th, 1914.

Mrs. J. Shane Nicholls,
5636 Woodmont Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

My dear Mrs. Nicholls:

Your letter of October 31st is at hand. I regret extremely that there was not the opportunity for you to take up the matter, of which you wrote, with me while I was in Pittsburgh, especially because I am very much at a loss to know what to write you. If, as you say, you doubt my sincerity in this matter, and the sincerity of the Woman's Board of Home Missions, multiplying words will scarcely improve the situation. I do feel, however, that I am warranted in calling your attention to the fact that there is absolutely no parallel between the Resolution Concerning Peace, passed by the Woman's Board of Home Missions, and the question of the appointment synodically, presbyterially and locally of temperance secretaries.

It has been the custom of the Woman's Board at various times to pass resolutions on matters that were of national interest and importance, and to urge upon the women of the Presbyterian Church an interest in these questions. This, I believe, is the custom of organizations of almost all kinds; that is, that they should place themselves upon record in regard to vital matters that were not in the direct line of their own form of work.

I cannot now recall that such a Resolution concerning Temperance has ever been passed but it is my personal opinion that such a Resolution, if introduced, would be approved and placed upon the records, especially in connection with an Annual Meeting of the Woman's Board. This would be what the Peace Resolution was, the calling the attention of the women of the Church to the evil, and the urging of them to use their influence in the cause. The matter, as presented at the Pennsylvania Synodical Meeting, has never been presented in this form and was not so presented at Pittsburgh. There it has always been the question of incorporating into the organization of the Woman's Board of Home Missions an entirely new department. There has never been, so far as I know, a request for a Resolution such as has been referred to above. On the contrary, it has been that the Woman's Board should urge the appointment of officers who should definitely carry on a campaign of a certain kind and that that should be an organization along the line which, logically, should report back to the head organization, as do the other departments.

This would mean that the Woman's Board at New York must be prepared to handle a large correspondence that would readily grow out of such work. This we are not prepared at present to do and, in spite of your disbelief in our sincerity, we do not believe that we are warranted in doing.

I most carefully refrained at Pittsburgh from raising one question that after the meeting of the Executive Committee was raised by a number of your own presbyterial presidents; that was, that methods for the promotion of

temperance are perhaps as keen a source of disagreement as may be found. Your own group of women working in Pittsburgh may be heartily agreed but the interjection of this question into many missionary societies would absolutely disrupt those Bodies for the purpose for which they were primarily organized. It is not that the women would oppose the idea of temperance but they would disagree violently concerning the means to be used.

As I say, I carefully refrained from raising this issue, as I wished to let the vote be taken on the fairest possible basis. But the women themselves raised the question after the meeting and said that in their communities such would be the case.

In view of the postscript in your letter I feel it necessary for me to say, and I trust you will accept my statement absolutely, that I had most carefully refrained before the meeting from discussing this matter with any person present, although I had traveled from Philadelphia with Mrs. Geil. In general, it is doubtless true that she and some of the others knew the position that, as an officer of the Woman's Board, I should take, but I had not discussed the matter with them at all, had not asked where they stood, and I assure you that I was not "asked to speak as I did." If, as you would seem to insinuate, the Executive Meeting was a planned and backed meeting, I at least was not a party thereto.

May I say further that no one was more surprised than was I at the overwhelming vote at the close, and the larger number of the women present gave me to understand very clearly that nothing that I had said had changed their

minds. This would seem to me to prove conclusively that the Presidents of Pennsylvania are not prepared to undertake this work on the basis proposed. That the women of the Church, and very especially of the Presbyterian Church, do not work adequately and faithfully for temperance, is to my mind a crying disgrace and as an active temperance worker of many years, who can show results in her own community from the campaigns that she has led, I blush with shame for the apathy of Christian women in this matter. I can realize how possible it is for us to disagree as to methods,- and I am willing that others should not agree with me as to the best ways of doing things,- but I am convinced that we cannot, as Christian people, be blind to a situation at our very doors.

I quite realize that this multiplying of words probably will not change your mind as to the methods, but I must ask you to believe in our sincerity in this matter. Should the day come when there should be a change in the position of the organization as a whole on this question, I will gladly further it to the best of my ability.

As to the relations of the individual women or groups of women to the W.C.T.U. or other organizations, that is quite outside of my province except as I mention it incidentally. In view of the whole situation, I should hesitate to advise concerning the formation of "Temperance Circles" in the Church or elsewhere. I should like you to believe that this is not because I have no opinions on the matter, I have a great many and very emphatic ones, but I am at this time writing officially and, therefore, feel it unwise for me to express myself on such a question. I feel that had I

been able to talk with you we might have seen this matter a little more clearly from the same point of view.

My stay in Pittsburgh was a very delightful one and I very much enjoyed it. I came away really rested, I believe, as it was not so strenuous as Board work at headquarters, with the added home duties.

Believe me that I am,

Very cordially yours,

B/P.

It has never seemed expedient to me to have the Board make Temperance a department of its work for the expense of carrying on the work should be ~~done~~ by the Temperance Board, just as the Freedmen Board looks after its women's department.

I can see too, how in many places it would not be wise to introduce Temperance as a part of home mission work, but in cases where it does work

My dear Mrs. Bennett; ^{Nov. 9-1914.}

Please do not think that I am of the opinion that either you or the Board is 'insincere'. I said the Board had not taken action on the Prohibition question because it had not 'wanted to'. I am very sure that both you and the Board are most sincere in that 'want not' and I believe firmly that the reasons are good as you see them.

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not well, either because there is no local St. C. T. U. or if one a very unpopular one, or where women prefer to give two minutes of their regular meeting rather than take another afternoon for a Temperance meeting, I feel that these cases should have the approval of the Board.

I have been told by an outsider that our Presbyterial had no right to take up Temperance work and the Board strongly disapproved of it. No one wants to be loyal to the Board more than I do. For my four years as president, speaking once or twice a week during the busy season, I have never in an address mentioned our Temperance work. The time was too short and then I hesitate to mention what our Board does not approve, so do not put me down as a crank on the subject. I think that a resolution similar to the one calling attention to the need for activity, leaving the method to the individual or to a local society, a Presbyterial or Synodical as may seem best, would be all right. It is embarrassing for me to carry on a work that our Board does not approve.

Indeed, I did not think for a minute

that the executive ⁴meeting
was a 'planned and patched'
affair, neither did I mean
that you were asked to
speak as you did, by where
you did. You were asked
to speak first and after
the Board's position was
set forth, everybody
hesitated to show any
disloyalty to the Board.
I know I did. I thought
that if after the women
had spoken you had
been asked to wind up
the discussion, there
~~would~~ have been more

freedom. I should not
have said a word if I
had not been asked to
by our committee.

I have the greatest respect
and admiration for both
you and Mrs. Geil and
I am confident nothing
was planned.

With an earnest desire
that the Board will either
approve the Temperance
work or the women of our
Presbytery will take it
out of our Home Mission
Work I am

Yours most sincerely
(Mrs. F. S.) Frances B. Nichols

November 25th, 1914.

Mrs. J. S. Nicholls,

My dear Mrs. Nicholls:

We seem to have, perhaps, misunderstood each other, but I trust that even though we have and we may not agree as to exact methods of doing work, we can nevertheless most cordially enjoy our service together in the mission work.

I do not believe that usually it is of value to continue the discussions beyond the point where we have each expressed our opinion, and yet I do want to say just one word more in replying to your letter, for you say: "I can see, too, how in many places it would not be wise to introduce temperance as a part of Home Mission work," and this is just one of the points that is so important. Whatever the Board, as a Board, stands for, it stands for National work and not for any special cases or locations. It is not possible for the Board to take a stand on a general matter in one part of the country if the same thing cannot be pushed in another. I am sure you will see what confusion this would soon cause.

I am quite willing to say frankly that I, myself, was surprised that I was called upon first at the time of your Executive Meeting; in fact, to be quite frank, I had not expected to be called upon to speak at all and had not made any plans as to what I would say. I had simply taken it for granted that the discussion would be carried on by the members of the Com-

Mrs. J. S. Nicholls.

mittee and that as questions arose these might be referred to me, so that I, myself, was in a somewhat embarrassing position when called upon to make a statement before there had been any discussion whatsoever.

Believe me that I am, with cordial good wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

B/P.

6 Temperance
Woman's Board of Home Missions
OF THE
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Per file

MRS. F. S. BENNETT, PRESIDENT
MISS EDITH GRIER LONG, GENERAL SECRETARY
MISS DORA M. FISH, TREASURER
MR. MARSHALL C. ALLABEN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

C O P Y

MRS. M. J. GILDERSLEEVE, SECRETARY FOR EDUCATIONAL WORK
MISS M. JOSEPHINE PETRIE, SECRETARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK
MISS ISABEL LAUGHLIN, SECRETARY FOR STUDENT WORK
MISS THEODORA FINKS, EDITOR OF THE HOME MISSION MONTHLY

Office of the President

April 15 1916

Miss Marie C Brehm
First National Bank Building,
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

My dear Miss Brehm:

A member of my Board who was present at the meeting of the Jersey City Presbyterial Society a few days ago tells me that at that time you made a most earnest plea to the members to appoint temperance secretaries in the missionary societies.

It always seems to me the best way to come frankly in matters of this kind to those who are most concerned and so I am coming to you with a protest concerning such action on your part.

The organization of the women into missionary societies has been fostered by the Woman's Boards of Home and Foreign Missions. The question of temperance secretaries is one that has been very thoroughly discussed by our organizations, and at a meeting held in Chicago last November, at which there were present representatives of all the Woman's Boards and from every synodical society, except Arizona, this matter was again very carefully considered. After such discussion the unanimous vote was that "all organizations auxiliary to the Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Boards confine their interests to the work authorized by these Boards."

Miss Brehm 2 April 15 1916

As the members of the church, or in any other organized capacity, of course the women are free to undertake any work desired by them, and I am sure that all of them as Christian women not only are interested in, but actively promote, the cause of temperance. The missionary organization, however, is definitely prepared to promote the cause of missions. That all missionaries promote temperance in their Mission fields I need not say.

We have been forced to the above step by the fact that the introduction of the temperance question into the missionary societies in some localities means a serious division in the missionary society. There are organizations definitely pledged for the temperance work and, as I have said, most of us work with them.

In view of this decision of the Boards which are promoting the missionary organizations in the Church and that bear the expenses of this promotion, we do not feel that it is quite fair for another agency of the Church to advocate in this organization a thing which has been definitely agreed shall not be promoted in them. It confuses the minds of the women greatly. They are asking how it is that one speaker tells them one thing and another tells them something quite different. While it is true that some societies have temperance secretaries these are not recognized by the Boards and the Board does not believe for many reasons that it should recognize them.

Miss Brehm 3 June 2 1916

Of course it is very easy to construe this to mean lack of interest in the temperance cause. I am sure I need not assure you that it is neither that nor jealousy of another phase of work. The position taken is due to the fact that we believe the best ultimate good will be attained by both missions and temperance by not trying to utilize the specific group organized for one thing for the promotion of another.

I trust you will accept my frankness in the spirit in which I write, and remain

Very sincerely yours,

B-D

C O P Y

The Board of Temperance
of the
Presbyterian Church in the U S A

Atlantic City, New Jersey
April 19 1916

Mrs F S Bennett,
156 Fifth Avenue
New York, N Y.

My dear Mrs Bennett:

Your letter of 15th inst has reached me here.

In replying I desire to be fair and kind and withal sisterly and christian. I'll begin by replying to your statement, "There are organizations definitely pledged for the Temperance work and as I have said most of us work with them." I take it that you mean to refer to the W C T U by that statement. Less than three per cent of the women church members in the United States are members of the W C T U and a large per cent of the others have no sympathy with it. Then present conditions do not argue that it is possible for that t three per cent to do all the Temperance work that the ninety-seven per cent is not doing.

Second -It is an organization made up of women of all denominations, but like the Anti-Saloon League - outside the church instead of in it. Every other organization in the Presbyterian Church recognizes the importance of the Temperance question and co-operates with the General Assembly's Board of Temperance, uses the tracts and does a measure of educational work among its own members, except the Woman's Board of Missions.

Mrs Bennett 2 April 19 1916

The result of this exclusion of consideration of a great question, which you know as well as I is more or less bound up with mission work at home and abroad, contributes to great confusion of thought when the women face the issue as citizens. I know positively that in November 1914 in the state of California members of Woman's Missionary Societies connected with Presbyterian Churches voted "wet" instead of "dry." The distribution of the "deliverances on Temperance of the General Assembly among these women before the campaign come on alone would have prepared them for better voting. It is my humble opinion that you would avoid division in the missionary societies if you allowed the temperance work to be considered as then there would be no division and only those who care would do the work. The division it seems to me is caused more by the exclusion of the question than by its admission. Surely the prohibition of the liquor traffic in this country would mean great advance to the work of Home Missions, then why not forward the cause instead of ruling it out?

I am sending your letter together with copy of mine to our Pittsburgh office for instruction regarding my own conduct. Up to this time I have been sent out to speak to all the people that would listen to my message. If the Board recognizes your right to exclude all discussion of the Temperance question from the meetings of the Presbyterials, undoubtedly I'll be instructed to remain away. As I am not charging for my services there cannot be any financial loss to the Board. My own conscience is clear for my commission from my Master is to go out and proclaim the truth about this great iniquity just as truly as to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. I have not yet been convinced that my message at any

Mrs Bennett 3 April 19 1916

Presbyterial has caused division, hindered missionary work or caused any other trouble. I have simply turned on the light with the hope of dispelling darkness.

Wishing you God's blessing on all your efforts to extend the kingdom of our Lord and Master.

I remain very cordially yours

In His Name

(signed) Marie C Brehm

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MISS THEODORA FINKS, EDITOR OF THE HOME MISSION MONTHLY

Office of the President

June 2 1916

Miss Marie C Brehm
First National Bank Building
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

My dear Miss Brehm:

I did not reply to your letter of April the nineteenth, both because I was laid up for three weeks with illness, after which I had to go to Atlantic City for the annual meeting of the Board, and also because you wrote that you were sending my letter on to your own Board and were awaiting their advice. I thought I might hear further from you after they had answered you.

I am afraid I did not make myself very clear in my former letter as I did not intend to raise the question of the matter of temperance being presented to the women of our churches. Such a suggestion from me would be out of place, and surely would be beyond my desire. Neither did I intend to raise the question of your presenting the matter of temperance to the missionary societies either local or Presbyterial if this were asked by them. The only question that I raised was that of urging either in person or by letter this cause upon their attention or asking the addition of a new department to the organizations that have been fostered and cared for by the Woman's Boards of Home and Foreign Missions.

I am thoroughly in sympathy not only with having church women work in outside temperance organizations but in having the women of

Miss Brehm 2 June 2 1916

copy

the church form such temperance organizations as they may desire, but I think I am quite within the plan marked out for the organizations auxiliary to the Boards of Home and Foreign Missions when I say they were brought into existence to promote the cause of missions, supplementing the work of the General Boards of Home and Foreign Missions, and that they can best achieve this end by confining themselves to this specific work.

It has been very definitely noted by many General Assemblies that the woman's organizations had a specific place in the church group, that their funds were to be secured for specified purposes, and that they were to conduct the work assigned them along definite lines. The women as church members give generously to the General Boards of the church; they give additionally as members of the missionary societies to the Boards for the work of which they are responsible.

It has been suggested from time to time that the missionary societies in their organized capacity interest themselves in the work of some of the General Boards of the Church. So soon as this happens the very reason for the existence of these societies ceases. I want to re-emphasize what I have said just above- as members of the church the women bear their share of that responsibility and it is the testimony of many pastors that they bear it well. This refers not only to their gifts but to their interest and service, where the latter is possible. The Board of Temperance has full and free approach to the women as church members and no one will wish it God speed in this service more heartily than will the Woman's Boards of Home and Foreign Missions.

Miss Brehm 3 June 2 1916

copy

The women's missionary organizations were formed, not as the agencies through which the women of the church should give all their service, not even all their missionary service, but as an opportunity to do a little more beyond that done through the church offerings for Home and Foreign Missions. We, therefore, feel that we are not only fair, but quite within the bounds of propriety when we ask that you do not urge the appointment of temperance secretaries in the organization which was brought into existence and is cared for by the Woman's Boards of Home and Foreign Missions.

Please believe me that it is on this point only that I am raising any question and not at all on the promotion of the cause you represent in any other part of the church and through any other agency. You have access to the church as a whole; this our Woman's Boards do not have, confining their influence to the missionary and young people's societies.

It is with hesitation that I write again for I would not be interpreted as being ungenerous to the work of any agency of the Presbyterian Church, but since the clear cut resolution of the delegates and members representing the Woman's Boards, I would be disloyal to my own Board did I keep silence.

I should be very glad to talk this over with you should the opportunity come. I am sure we would then each appreciate the position of the other more clearly. I am sending a copy of this to your Board.

Believe me, that I am,

MKB-SMB

Very sincerely yours,

C O P Y

THE BOARD OF TEMPERANCE
of the
Presbyterian Church in
U S A

June 5th 1916

Mrs F S Bennett
156 5th Avenue, New York

My dear Mrs Bennett:

Your favor of 3rd instant received with enclosures.

We recognize the right and the propriety of your organization to determine what lines of work it will pursue. At no time has our Board taken any action recommending the appointment of temperance secretaries in Home Missionary Societies. As you are of course aware, some Presbyterian Societies have done this on their own initiative, but the work has absolutely no connection with out work, and never has had. At one time in the Pittsburgh Presbytery we paid part of the expense of a representative which the Temperance Secretary of the Woman's Home Missionary Society employed. That arrangement ceased to exist about two years ago, agreeable to all parties concerned.

In the particular instance of the Jersey City Presbyterian Society, I understood that Miss Brehm had been invited by the Society or some of its members to address them on the subject of temperance. I do not know what the understanding was with her regarding the character of her address, but your second letter to her, under date of June 2nd, seems to me to remove all difficulties when you say that you raise no question about the presentation of this subject when the Presbyterian Society so desires. So far as I know no representative of the Board has ever sought an opportunity to present this subject to your Societies. We have, as stated, responded to a few invitations of this kind.

Twelve years ago when I came to this position I found some confusion existing concerning this subject. Notwithstanding the facts as before given in this letter, there seems to have remained a feeling that in some way the Board of Temperance was quietly seeking to introduce secretaries into the Societies. Let me say now frankly and for all time that such is not the case and has not been.

I conferred with the President of the Board this morning, and it was agreed that I should write assuring you that we have no intention or desire to interfere or in any wise confuse the work of your Board. If at any time anything occurs which seems unfair or discourteous, please believe that it is not intentional, and that upon information we will give it immediate and respectful attention.

Yours cordially and sincerely

(signed) Chas Scamlan

General Secretary

S:L

Young People's Work